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OWENS-CORNING
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OWENS-CORNING FIBERGLAS CORPORATION

INTRA-COMPANY CORRESPONDENCE

General Offices - Toledo, Ohio

May 23, 1941

Attention of Mr. Harold Boeschenstein

cc: Mr. W. P. Zimmerman
Mr. E. J. Marshall
Mr. C. G. Steelin
Mr. T. S. Rogers
Mr. R. J. Scott
Mr. W. R. Thomas - St. Louis

Subject TRIP REPORT
St. Louis, Monday, May 19, 1941
Chicago, Tuesday, May 20, 1941
Health Aspects of Fiberglass

The detailed trip report follows:

Results:

1. Assurance by Mr. Bartley that Local No. 1 will take no action before June 3 and practical assurance that the result will be favorable.
2. Revelation that the union's concern is with the possibility of a silicosis hazard and that the dermatitis hazard is secondary and not nearly so important as we had been led to believe.
3. Complete satisfaction of the questions raised by the A.I.H.A. section.
4. Contact established with National Safety Council and way paved for carrying out a helpful program with them.
5. Discovery of the role of Defense Commission investigators in re Fiberglass materials and "Conservation of Manpower" program.

At the request of the newly formed St. Louis section of the American Industrial Hygiene Association, the following Owens-Corning representatives reached St. Louis Monday, May 19, prepared to discuss the health aspects of Fiberglass products:

Edward C. Ames
Dr. H. W. Campbell
Owen Morris
Tyler Stewart Rogers
Roy J. Scott
Carl G. Steelin.

Present also, representing the St. Louis office, were:

George Becker
W. R. Thomas

Mr. Boeschenstein

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and, representing A. G. Brauer Supply Company, St. Louis marketers industrial insulation marketers:

Oscar Brauer
William Thompson
Three other representatives.

A suite (Room 434) was engaged at the Forest Park Hotel, which was selected as headquarters because the dinner meeting of the A.I.H.A. was scheduled in that hotel at 6:15.

Shortly after arrival, we telephoned

Mr. William H. Bartley

of Bartley & Mayfield (Chestnut 7163). Mr. Bartley is attorney for Local No. 1 of the Asbestos Workers Union. He confirmed his acceptance of our invitation to him and the members of the Executive Committee of the Union to meet with us in the suite.

Shortly before noon Mr. Bartley arrived with

Mr. Gus Schmitter

business agent of the union local, and the following officers and members of the Union's Executive Committee:

Mr. Gerry O'Connor, President
Mr. Slayter, Secretary
Mr. Stadler
Mr. Peeples
Mr. Brubaker
Mr. Block
And one other

Before their arrival, ample displays of both wool and textile products were arranged about the suite, together with mounted pictures showing manufacturing processes and applications.

In the meantime, Mr. Ames had telephoned

Mr. H. A. Thiemann,
Suite 1744, Piers Building,
St. Louis - (Tel. Main 5540)

President of the St. Louis Section of the A.I.H.A., to suggest procedure for handling the evening meeting. Mr. Thiemann, who is engineer with the St. Louis office of the Hartford Accident and Indemnity Company, agreed to come to the hotel during the afternoon to discuss the matter further.

Exhibit A

Exhibit B

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In the meantime, too, Messrs. Staelin and Thomas visited the office of Dr. Roy Philip Scholz, St. Louis surgeon who has been using Fiberglas for surgical suturing material for three years. They reported that Dr. Scholz agreed to furnish us with a statement about the results he had been having with the material.

Exhibit C

To Mr. Bartley, Mr. Ames gave the greeting of Mr. Marshall, and it was evident that Mr. Bartley has a high regard for Mr. Marshall. Mr. Bartley emphasized the favorable impression that Mr. Marshall has created upon him by his willingness to make information available. He reiterated many times his statement that his interest extends only to the health aspects of our materials. He was emphatic in his contention that competitive propaganda, actual or implied, has no bearing whatsoever on his determination to make an objective and disinterested appraisal of the subject, and that if we could prove to his satisfaction that no occupational hazards jeopardize the health of workers applying Fiberglas materials, he will recommend that union members go ahead and work with Fiberglas as they work with other insulating products.

For approximately two hours the gathering was informal. Conversations in groups of two and three and four concerned principally the samples and photographs on display. The atmosphere was one of comfortable, good-natured relaxation.

Mr. Bartley is a florid-faced, portly, white-haired gentleman approximately 55 years old. He has a professional manner and appears to dominate the legal business of the A.F. of L. building trades in St. Louis. He has excellent political connections in Jefferson City, being a member of several state boards devoted to workers' welfare. He is easy to talk to, straightforward, incorruptible. The union members look to him to articulate their perplexities, and they regard him as their champion. His influence among them is paramount and his statement that they will act only on his recommendation, said in a matter-of-fact manner minus any suggestion of pomposity or boasting, is borne out by the confidence that they manifest toward him.

While a buffet luncheon was being served, Mr. Bartley, Mr. Schmitters, and Mr. Ames drew apart at Mr. Bartley's suggestion. Mr. Bartley reviewed his interest in the subject and took from his brief case a marked copy of the resolution relating to Fiberglas that appeared in the April issue of the Asbestos Worker. He dismissed as almost unworthy of comment the so-called dermatitis hazard, citing the fact that many cement workers are allergic to ingredients of cement mixtures and have to acquire some "know how" in handling lest they suffer skin irritation. He stressed

Exhibit D

The fact that dermatitis is a common complaint in many of the building trades and that when an individual is found to be allergic to a material he ought to find a means of livelihood where he is not obliged to expose himself to the material, or stick long enough on a job to condition himself and develop immunity toward the material.

Uppermost in Mr. Bartley's thinking is the possibility of so-called anisocytosis hazard in handling Fiberglas. He requested information about that, pointed out that he was looking forward to the presentation at the A.I.N.A. meeting, and emphasized that he had been in touch with Mr. Thiesmann, of whom he had requested permission for himself and the executive committee members to attend, not with the thought of introducing controversy into the meeting but because he considered the meeting a good opportunity to become informed.

Mr. Ames informed Mr. Bartley that we were looking forward to having the union representatives attend the dinner as our guests. He took a poll of the representatives, and they agreed. Mr. Ames pointed out that the attitude of the union representatives and that of the A.I.N.A. were parallel on the question of finding out the true situation in re a possible hazard, and therefore we were looking forward very much to the opportunity of putting all facts at their disposal.

At approximately 2:30 Mr. Bartley called the Union group to order. To introduce the subject he pointed out to the Union representatives that he was gratified that Owens-Corning should be willing to meet the issue with fairness and frankness. The resolution from the Asbestos Worker was read, and at that point Mr. Scott interrupted -- to set the record straight -- by reading the letter from Consolidated Edison to the effect that they do not regard Fiberglas as a hazardous material and know of no effects deleterious to health.

The interruption had a good effect, for it illustrated that we were prepared to conduct a frontal action, counterattacking allegations with documentary proof.

Then Mr. Ames spoke, pointing out that although Fiberglas is a new material, it is already basic in hundreds of different applications. He cited humanitarian uses like the use of Fiberglas by Dr. Scholz in surgical sutures, battleship insulation, inner soles for policeman's shoes and oil refinery insulation, tracer threads in surgical sponges and ear-loads of glass wool for refrigerator insulation. He mentioned airplane uses and army and navy uses.

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He pointed out that it is right and proper that anyone not familiar with Fiberglas should inquire about health aspects of the material, that we had received numerous inquiries and had answered them all to the satisfaction of the interrogators, that insurance companies, state departments of welfare, manufacturers, industrial physicians, safety engineers all wanted to know:

Exhibit FExhibit G

Mr. Ames mentioned Dr. Evans at duPont, Dr. McIlvaine at Badd, The Pennsylvania Safe Practices Conference which published Mr. Rogers' address as Bulletin No. 52. He called attention to the fact that we are not amateurs in the glass business and that although our company is comparatively new, it stems from the research and development activity of two established glass companies which were pioneers in the work of encouraging medical investigations to protect their people against the dread disease silicosis. He said the danger of silicosis exists only where free silica is in the air, and that when the fusion of silica and the other mineral ingredients of the batch takes place, silica becomes a silicate. He compared this phenomenon to what happens when sodium (a highly corrosive metal) combines with chlorine (a poison gas) to make sodium chloride or common table salt. He compared it also to what happens when hydrogen (a highly explosive gas) combines with oxygen to make water, without which man could not live.

But, he emphasized, even though it was known to be true that a silicosis hazard exists only where free silica in infinitesimally fine particles is likely to be breathed, good business sense told us that we should anticipate questions about this versatile new glass and determine whether in its fibrous form glass might conceivably raise an unknown hazard. Accordingly, he said, we enlisted the services of the most eminent medical authority in the field of lung disorders — Dr. Leroy U. Gardner, director of Saranac laboratory, whose experiments not only reassured us about the absence of any silicosis hazard but made it possible for us to go ahead with an absolutely clear conscience as regards the welfare of our own production employees and the employees of manufacturers or contractors applying the materials as well as regards any possible liability that might jeopardize our business.

Exhibit H

Mr. Ames also pointed out that our own group insurance rates are low and that we enjoy an industrial compensation rate (95¢ per \$100 of payroll for wool workers and 66¢ for textile workers) as compared with \$1.00 for asbestos manufacturers, \$1.10 for magnesia manufacturers, \$1.60 clay products manufacturers, etc.

Exhibit I

At this point, Mr. Staalin was introduced and discussed Dr. Gardner's research.

Mr. Ames then recapitulated Mr. Staalin's remarks, calling attention to the final sentence in Dr. Gardner's report:

"Trusting these findings may allay any scepticism as to a theoretical hazard involved from the handling of glass wool, I am"

Exhibit J

Exhibit

Mr. Ames then introduced Dr. Campbell who bore testimony to the health program at the Newark plant. Dr. Campbell had assembled figures showing the incidence of various kinds of diseases among 1055 production employees. He pointed out that although the average age of the employed group studied is 31 — the age where the incidence of tuberculosis is high — there were fewer lung disorders among our people than among other average groups. He said that as plant physician he is much more concerned about good housekeeping to make sure that shipping clerks do not fall from loading docks and break legs than about lung or skin disorders, that new workers sometimes are concerned about skin irritation until they become accustomed to handling our products under the tutelage of older employees on the basis of whose experience we drafted our recommended practices set forth in Fiberglas Standards F 4.2.1. Dr. Campbell mentioned Dr. Evans' statement to him following a visit to the Newark plant in June 1940 that the difference between handling of Fiberglas by duPont employees and by Fiberglas employees was one of attitude.

Exhibit F

Exhibit L

Dr. Campbell cited an excerpt from an article by J. W. Miller and R. R. Sayers on "Response of Peritoneal Tissue to Industrial Dusts" from the American Ceramic Society's publication Vol. 20, No. 5 (May, 1941) reprinted from U.S. Public Health Reports. The article lists glass wool among the inert dusts that cause no pulmonary fibrosis.

Mr. Rogers then spoke about other mineral wools, and he compared them to Fiberglas in regard to cleanliness and dusting. He described his experience before the Pennsylvania Safety Practices Conference.

Mr. Ames was called from the room at this point to meet Mr. Thiemann. The conference continued with Mr. Scott presiding, and the discussion turned into an informal question-and-answer session.

When Mr. Ames returned about 5:30, Mr. Slayter (the union secretary) congratulated us on the way we had "put out the information" and assured Mr. Ames that they were well satisfied and "when they decided to use Fiberglas they'd keep on using it until the end of time."

In his discussion in Room 431, Mr. Ames prevailed upon Mr. Thiemann to defer the business session and discussion of convention papers until the Fiberglas discussion was completed. He was persuaded to do so on the assumption that the union men would become restless if they were obliged to sit through an hour and a half of convention reports. This agreement was fortunate, for it meant that we were to have the opportunity of telling our story immediately after dinner when the audience was fresh.

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Approximately 75 persons attended the A.I.E.A. meeting. The group included plant physicians, industrial nurses, safety engineers, insurance company claim agents, personnel men from the St. Louis area. Seated at the head table were Dr. Campbell, Mr. Rogers, Mr. Ames, Mr. Thiemann and

Miss Agnes Rabbit (pronounced RAYbit)

who is secretary of the section. She is an industrial nurse at Anheuser-Busch. In the audience also were:

Mr. Millman, Aetna safety engineer
Mr. Young, Aetna claim agent
Dr. Theodore Hanser (or Hanser), Anheuser-Busch plant physician
Ray M. Seeker, Anheuser-Busch personnel and safety director

Following the dinner, Mr. Thiemann turned the meeting over to Mr. Ames, who covered approximately the same points covered with the union representatives during the afternoon. He recognized, however, that the audience was technically minded, and we discussed the Gardner report in greater detail. Mr. Staelin read the latest inhalation experiment progress report just received from Dr. Gardner. Dr. Campbell again discussed the health record at the Newark plant, Mr. Rogers discussed quality control of the batch and made the point that Fiberglas materials are a highly refined form of rock and slag wools with which industry has been familiar for fifty years. Mr. Scott spoke of the psychological handicap which our products may have because they are known to be glass, and called upon Mr. Ames to read the telegram pointing out the fact that the Ohio Industrial Commission has given us a rating lower than that enjoyed by other industries.

During the question period Mr. Bartley asked for comments by insurance company representatives on their rating and experience on workers handling glass wool. Mr. Millman, the Aetna man, responded, saying that Fiberglass is not considered a hazardous material and that there is no separate classification in which Fiberglass is put as being any more or less hazardous than other insulations.

He said that Aetna had found the Alton employees of Owens-Illinois to be excellent risks and that Aetna does not consider glass manufacturing employees to be subject to any special hazard. "They don't require as high a rate as for asbestos," he said, and although he was speaking of a bottle manufacturer, he said his remarks applied also to Owens-Corning because there is no silicosis hazard beyond the batch house.

Exhibit F

Mr. Boeschstein

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Members of the audience were invited to come to A34 following the meeting to see our display. Mr. Bartley came and asked for a copy of the Gardner report, dated May 9, 1936 as well as F.4.2.1 and the Pennsylvania Bulletin, No. 58. Mr. Staelin had supplied him with a copy of Dr. Gardner's Interim report of May 16, 1941. He told Mr. Ames that the union was to have a meeting May 20, but that they would take no action without his recommendation. Although he said he was convinced as a result of our presentation that there is no health hazard in handling Fiberglas, he said he was to be in Jefferson City on May 20 and desired to check with the Missouri Department of Health to see if they had any further information. This was an obvious face-saver. He asserted that there would be a decision by the local at the following meeting, scheduled for June 3, and although he did not commit himself, he intimated strongly that the decision will be favorable to Fiberglas.

Dr. Hanser brought with him to our suite

Mr. Upshaw

assistant general manager of the Anheuser-Busch plant, who was reported by one of the Owens-Corning men to have asked Dr. Hanser whether he would permit use of Fiberglas at Anheuser-Busch plant. "I am completely satisfied," Dr. Hanser is reported to have replied.

Mr. Seeker also came up, as did the following:

F. K. Emerich, safety engineer
Lumbermens Mutual Casualty Co.
Railway Exchange Building, St. Louis

John Russell, chief engineer
Industrial Hygiene Service
St. Louis Health Division
59 Municipal Courts Building, St. Louis

Mr. Seeker's presence gave Mr. Ames an opportunity to discuss with him a letter which had been handed to Mr. Ames at dinner. The letter was written by

S. E. Horrell, general manager of operations
The Carey Salt Company, Hutchinson, Kansas.

Mr. Horrell is a member of the National Defense Commission for the State of Kansas. His letter asked Mr. Seeker how Seeker was progressing on the "difficulties encountered in the use of Fiberglas at Anheuser-Busch

Exhibit M

Exhibit O

Exhibit P

Exhibit Q

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and whether a satisfactory solution had been found to the problem. It so happens, Mr. Horrell's letter continued, that on a recent inspection trip for the U. S. Labor Department, he visited a company making Fiberglas to insulate semi-trailers being manufactured for the War Department. (The reference apparently was to Trueshaft in Kansas City). He said he had been told that two men were in the hospital due to an infection caused after working with spun glass insulation. He said he had been told that no solution had been found and that the only thing they could think of was rotate the employees. The letter said he had written "Mr. Guilbert" but had had no definite answer, and he was suggesting that Guilbert take up the matter in Washington and see if some other material could be substituted for Fiberglas. "This in turn," the letter added, "would be of great service to manufacturers using this material on Government contracts." The letter said also that he was writing "Rube Farney" to see whether he had any data, and it promised to send along Mr. Seeker any further information.

Mr. Seeker told Mr. Ames that Rube Farney is

R. L. Farney
Director, Industrial Division
National Safety Council
20 North Wacker Drive
Chicago, Illinois

and that Mr. Guilbert is

Harry Gilbert (spelling not certain)
The Pullman Company
Chicago.

Exhibit E

Gilbert, Seeker added, is a dollar-a-year man in the National Defense Commission's program for the Conservation of Manpower in Industry and is in charge of the Ten-state region embracing Kansas.

In Chicago Tuesday morning, May 20, Mr. Ames informed Mr. Zimmerman of this situation. Mr. Zimmerman suggested that it was better to approach Mr. Guilbert through Gustin-Bacon, but with Mr. Zimmerman's approval Mr. Ames visited Mr. Farney, who called into the conference

Mr. G. E. Burns
National Safety Council
Chicago

Mr. Ames did not mention the Horrell letter, introducing himself by mentioning his meeting in St. Louis the night before with Mr. Seeker. That was so, Mr. Farney said, because the National Safety Council

recently had received many inquiries about the health aspects of F rglas. He pointed out two on his desk: one from Mr. Horrell of Carey Salt (obviously a duplicate of the letter sent to Mr. Secker which Mr. Ames had seen in St. Louis) and one from Dr. Hazlitt (spelling uncertain), plant physician of Westinghouse in East Pittsburgh. The Westinghouse letter had samples of tapes and braided sleeving attached, and Mr. Forney indicated that the inquiry was about dermatitis.

Exhibit S

The conference lasted an hour and three quarters. Both Mr. Forney and Mr. Burns maintained a constant interest in the subject, and a thorough presentation was made. Three results may come from this meeting.

- 1) Mr. Forney indicated that he may relay to us copies of the inquiries received so that we may suggest replies to appear in the Council's monthly publication.
- 2) The editor of the Council's publication will be interested in obtaining a popularized account of Dr. Gardner's findings to appear this autumn after he has published his report in one of the medical journals.
- 3) Suggestion was made that we participate in the Safety Council's National convention this October by taking a booth where we can display our products and emphasize health aspects for the benefit of personnel men and safety engineers who come to the convention.

(A proposal already has been received from the National Safety Council on this subject).

It is not unlikely that we may be able to engineer a place on the Convention program for a discussion of the subject.

Mr. Ames then returned to Toledo Tuesday evening with Mr. Scott.

Exhibit T